

*FROM THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE DEMOCRATIC STAFF*  
**The Attorney General Should Serve All Americans**

*Being a Senator does not absolve a nominee for Attorney General of the United States from answering tough questions in the confirmation process. The Sessions nomination deserves a thorough examination in the Senate Judiciary Committee where both Republicans and Democrats can get all of their questions answered.*

**Controversial, Partisan Nominees for Attorney General Have Received Close Scrutiny by the Judiciary Committee**

- The Attorney General of the United States has immense power to enforce the nation's laws and prosecute crime. **There are legitimate concerns that many of Senator Sessions' past positions indicate a troubling pattern of disregard for laws that protect Americans' rights.** This includes Senator Sessions' views on civil rights, national security and civil liberties, sentencing and criminal justice, immigration, women's rights and sexual assault, disability rights, and the role of a prosecutor.
- The Judiciary Committee must thoroughly review the nominee's record. **Controversial nominees for Attorney General have often received multiple days of hearings** in the Senate Judiciary Committee so that the American people receive a full vetting of the record. Senator Sessions deserves equal treatment in the Committee.
  - For example, former Republican Senator John Ashcroft's hearings to be Attorney General during the Bush administration lasted four days and included testimony from 23 outside witnesses, including 4 Members of Congress. Senator Ashcroft testified for two days, while outside witnesses testified for another two days.
  - Chairman Grassley has thus far scheduled only 2 days for the entire hearing for Senator Sessions, and has allowed for only 9 outside witnesses. This is despite the fact that Senator Sessions has served 20 years as a U.S. Senator, compared to the 6 years that Senator Ashcroft had served at the time of his hearing.

**There Are Serious Questions as to Whether An Attorney General Sessions Would Protect the Rights of All Americans**

- "Given Senator Sessions' record and public statements, **the burden should be on him** to prove to the Judiciary Committee, the Senate, and the American people – especially to communities of color and immigrant communities – that he can be trusted with the tremendous power of the U.S. Justice Department to enforce our nation's civil rights and immigration laws with integrity, fairness, and a sense of justice." [*Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*, [12/1/16](#)]
- "The ACLU as a matter of long-standing policy does not support or oppose candidates for elected or appointed office. However, questions regarding police reform, voting rights, immigrants' rights, criminal justice reform, Muslims' rights, racial justice, LGBT rights,

women's rights, privacy rights, torture, and abortion rights must be asked of and answered by Jeff Sessions if the Senate is to be discharged of its duty and if Americans are to be fully informed of how the nominee is to serve as the nation's highest law enforcement officer. The attorney general must be an individual who will steadfastly enforce the U.S. Constitution and protect the civil rights and liberties of all Americans equally. **The Senate Judiciary Committee must give Jeff Sessions a tough confirmation hearing and, for their Senate colleagues and the sake of the American public, thoroughly explore whether Sen. Sessions is up to the task.**” [*American Civil Liberties Union [report](#), 1/4/17*]

- As you prepare the confirmation hearings for the nomination of Senator Sessions to serve as the next Attorney General of the United States, **I write to express the concerns** of our non-partisan, 74-year-old Quaker lobby in the public interest. **We are particularly eager to understand how Senator Sessions will carry out the responsibilities of the nation's top law enforcement officer given the policy positions he has expressed and supported in the past.**” [*[Letter](#) from Friends Committee on National Legislation, A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest, 1/6/17*]